

VZCZCXYZ0013
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHNO #0533/01 2711511
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 281511Z SEP 07
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1230
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 5765
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RULSOCA/NSF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHNO/USDELMC BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/USNMR SHAPE BE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 000533

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/05/2017
TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [KCFE](#) [RU](#)
SUBJECT: RUSSIAN MILITARY DOCTRINE VIEWS NATO AS A
CHALLENGE, NOT A THREAT

REF: PETERSON/SMYTH E-MAILS

Classified By: DCM Richard Olson for reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

11. (C) This is an Action Request: please see paragraph 8.

12. (C) Summary: After delivering a lackluster briefing on Russian military reforms, Russian Senior Military Representative Kuznetsov demonstrated previously unseen frankness in responding to Allies' questions in the September 29 NATO-Russia Council (NRC) meeting. Kuznetsov emphasized repeatedly that Russia does not consider NATO a strategic threat, but nonetheless, "the activities of NATO are considered a challenge to Russian security." He expects a Russian inter-agency task force to complete the new military doctrine in 2008, which will identify terrorism and proliferation as the principal threats to Russian security. Regarding the Russian recent resumption of long-range bomber missions, Kuznetsov said Russian flight crews need more training and the bombers are key to maintaining "strategic stability." He said Cold War "rules" for the flights are still in place and called on all concerned nations to renegotiate them. Charge Olson refuted Kuznetsov's attempt to equate Russian bomber activity with U.S. activity. (Note: Allies have not fully grasped the differences between the U.S. and Russian flights, and therefore, Post would like to brief Allies at 26 on the differences (see Request for Guidance in paragraph 8). End note.) The Russian delegation told us privately that Chief of General Staff Baluyevski approved the briefing to the NRC in response to U.S. efforts at increased transparency in the NRC over the past year, but that the Russian mission pushed the envelope with frank responses to Allies' questions. End Summary.

Russian Military Reforms

13. (C) In his opening statement, Russian Senior Military Representative to NATO Vice-Admiral Valentine Kuznetsov delivered a bland presentation on the state of Russian military reforms (Slides to be e-mailed to EUR/RPM upon receipt). He claimed that the transformation plan and the reform of command and control are largely complete and have reached a "normal level of development." Stressing that the Russian armed forces will continue to move toward a professional army, Kuznetsov estimated that professional soldiers versus conscripts in the Russian armed forces would

increase from 55 to 70 percent by the end of 2008. Russian military priorities include maintenance of the strategic deterrent, improved mobility of the armed forces, increased permanent readiness of its units, armament modernization, increased training, and military education reform. He said Russia requires a strategic deterrent to safeguard itself and its Allies. Kuznetsov said Russia plans to spend between 2.5 to 3 percent of its GDP on its military budget.

14. (C) Germany, Romania and Norway asked about Russian plans to increase inter-operability with NATO. Kuznetsov said that the 15th Motorized Brigade's officer corps trains to be inter-operable with NATO. He asserted that in 2009 or 2010, Russia would be able to conduct joint exercises with NATO to include strategic airlift for deployments.

NEW MIL DOCTRINE: NATO A CHALLENGE BUT NOT A THREAT

15. (C) In response to questions from the Netherlands, Canada, the Czech Republic, and Romania, Kuznetsov said work has been under way on the new military doctrine for two years and he expects it to be complete in 2008. The Russian National Security Council is tasked to coordinate the revision and the relevant departments and agencies are working on it in an inter-agency ad-hoc team. Due to the changes in the global situation, he said, the 2000 military doctrine is out-of-date and the new doctrine will reflect the move from confrontation to a cooperative approach; terrorism and proliferation will be described as the top threats to Russian national security.

In response to questions from the Netherlands, Czech Republic and Lithuania, Kuznetsov said Russia will not identify NATO as a threat to Russian security; however, "some

activities of NATO represent a challenge to its security." He said the doctrine would have a clear link between identified threats and any development of missile defense. Deploying guidance, Charge Olson asked Kuznetsov about the role of its collective security arrangements in the new military doctrine, which was one of the few questions Kuznetsov left unanswered.

RESUMPTION OF LONG-RANGE BOMBER FLIGHTS

16. (C) Norway, Canada, Iceland, and the UK all asked Kuznetsov about the resumption of Russian long-range bomber flights. Iceland noted problems caused by the flights because the Russian bombers are entering into areas of high civilian air traffic. The Icelandic Perm Rep asked if it would be possible for Russia to provide pre-notification and plans on the frequency of the flights. (Note: Iceland told us privately that the Russians have stonewalled their bilateral attempts to discuss this issue. End note.) Kuznetsov claimed Russia decided to resume the strategic patrolling for technical and political reasons. The technical reason is that all of the flights serve to train the strategic bomber crews. Politically, Russia wants to maintain strategic stability, and the bombers are a pillar of their Strategic Triad. He asserted that in the absence of new rules, the Cold War rules still apply, and as such, Russia is abiding by them. (Note: In a subsequent private conversation with the Russian delegation, it appears the Russians are referring to START Treaty notifications. End Note). Both sides, Kuznetsov said, could put an end to the flights, and he called for concerned nations to get together to renegotiate the rules. Charge Olson pushed back on the Russian claim that the rules of the Cold War are still in place and explained that the United States does not fly nuclear capable bombers in the vicinity of Russian territory.

Olson suggested that instead we look for cooperative efforts in which we share the same strategic objectives.

17. (C) There is considerable confusion among NATO Allies concerning the differences between U.S. and Russian long-range flights as a justification for the resumption of

their flights. Italy, France, Norway, and the Czech Republic have asked us for clarification. Therefore, Post would like to brief Allies on the key differences in an informal format at 26 (see action request paragraph 8).

REQUEST FOR GUIDANCE

18. (C) Post requests talking points by OOB (Brussels) on October 2 to use with Allies at 26 in an informal setting to refute Russian claims that the Russian resumption of long-range bomber flights is comparable to U.S. missions. Further, guidance is requested to respond to the Russian assertion that Cold War treaties and rules (i.e., notifications under the START Treaty) make their renewed air activity routine. Post also requests instructions on whether to raise the strategic bomber flight issue in one of the NRC's technical committees.

Naval Strategy

19. (C) In response to a U.S. question, Kuznetsov said the Russian Navy would like to increase its participation in Operation Active Endeavor in the Mediterranean and Operation Black Sea Harmony (non-NATO operation with Turkey). Russia would like to pursue similar cooperative efforts focused on counter-terrorism in the Pacific and North Sea.

SA-400 Missile Defense System

110. (C) In response to a Czech question on the deployment of the SA-400 missile defense system, Kuznetsov noted it is not linked to the missile defense system around Moscow, which is designed to counter ICBMs. He said the SA-400 is a mobile

system to counter medium and short-range threats, and the SA-400 has a targeting system superior to the older SA-300. He noted both systems (long-range Moscow and SA-400) are in compliance with Russian obligations to "our American colleagues."

COMMENT

111. (C) The briefing was a dramatic departure from Russian less-than-forthright modus operandi in the NRC. Most Allies were surprised when the Russians accepted the U.S. proposal to discuss their military reforms and even more so with the positive tone and frankness in Vice-Admiral Kuznetsov's responses to Allied questions. While nearly all of the Perm Reps asked tough, but reasonable questions, the tone around the table did not split along east/west lines as is often the case. The Russian delegation privately told us that CHOD Baluyevski agreed to the U.S. suggestion for the briefing because of the increased transparency and willingness to discuss tough issues that the U.S. has shown in the NRC over the past year. It is unclear whether the Russians view this briefing as a one-off or if it will open a broader avenue for NRC dialogue. The briefing was a good general overview, but Post would like to bore down into the specifics of some of the issues. To this end, it may be worthwhile to examine the strategic bomber issue in one of the NRC's technical committees. This initiative would be welcomed by the concerned Allies, particularly Iceland, which has gotten nowhere with Russia in bilateral discussions. End Comment.
NULAND